

## House Republican Press Release

May 10, 2005

Press Office: 860-240-8700

### **Rep. Harkins: Legislation Designating Corsair as State Aircraft Signed Into Law**



Legislation cosponsored by state Representative John Harkins, R-Stratford, that designates the F4U Corsair as the state aircraft and sets May 29<sup>th</sup> as Corsair Day was signed into law today by Governor M. Jodi Rell. Workers at Vought-Sikorsky, United Aircraft, Pratt and Whitney and Hamilton Standard produced the Corsair, the only major combat aircraft of World War II that was built entirely in Connecticut.

Of the 12,571 Corsairs manufactured between 1940 and 1952, only about 20 to 30 still exist today. It was the first American production aircraft that could achieve air speeds in excess of 400 miles per hour. It was the only American fighter designed before the United States entered World War II that was still being manufactured in 1953. It was the last propeller driven aircraft built for American fighter pilots. During World War II, for every Corsair shot down in air combat, Corsairs downed 11 enemy fighters.

“Legislation that recognizes the importance of the Corsair is long overdue,” said Representative Harkins, who spoke in favor of the legislation (SB 585) on the Floor of the House of Representatives. “The facility that built the Corsair remains in Stratford and we should be proud of its history and the fact that we are still building tremendous aircraft in Connecticut. Hopefully, we can someday recognize the contributions of the Blackhawk helicopter, which is also built in Stratford.”